

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PROGRESS REPORT FOR WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT  
July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005**

**In accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) #1-04, Job Service North Dakota submits the following Progress Report on Workforce Information activities for the period July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. This report is organized into three sections as directed by the TEGL. Section A describes the accomplishments for each core product or service. Section B presents a summary of the Customer Satisfaction Assessment. Section C contains recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Suite of Core Products.**

**A. CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

**1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data:**

The ALMIS Database is the foundation of the workforce information applications for North Dakota's electronic delivery system. It provides an expansive data storage system from which other data delivery systems may retrieve pertinent workforce information. As such, it is important that this database contains the most current and accurate data possible. The LMI Center updated the ALMIS core tables with new data as it became available, populated new tables, and tested for data integrity. Job Service North Dakota has implemented Virtual One Stop (VOS) Version 6.0 developed by GeoSolutions. GeoSolutions has updated the ALMIS Database to Version 2.2 as a part of the implementation of VOS Version 6.0.

The LMI Center loaded the most recent version of the employer database from InfoUSA as soon as the CD was available. The database provides users with a current listing of employer data that can be accessed by firm name, city, county, industry, or firm size. The use of the InfoUSA database allows us to provide employer-specific information to our customers without release of confidential employer data from our UI Tax or QCEW files.

**2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections:**

The LMI Center has updated the NAICS history files in both the short-term and long-term industry employment projections programs. Despite having an historic employment time series in place, the Projections Software Suite continued to have a series of program bugs. As a result, North Dakota chose to wait until a stable version of the projections software was available in late June before beginning to run the projections. Statewide long-term and short-term industry projections were completed in August 2004. Statewide long-term occupational projections were then completed in October 2004. The long-term industry and occupational projections publication was developed and was published in

published in January 2005. The short-term occupational employment projections were completed and the results posted on our website in February 2005.

North Dakota has begun the preparatory work for substate industry and occupational projections. A short-term and long-term NAICS industry employment time series is currently being developed for the three MSA's and the four OES regions in North Dakota. Because occupational staffing patterns were not available for the eight planning regions, a decision was made to switch from the eight governor's planning regions to the MSA's and OES regions as the areas for substate projections. By using these substate areas, we will be able to utilize the existing OES staffing patterns in the projections process. Furthermore, in the publication phase, we will be able to link substate occupational wage data from the OES program with our occupational projections data to produce a much more complete occupational product for these areas.

However, because of North Dakota's small and largely rural labor force, it is still uncertain if occupational projections would be reliable at the substate level. Further testing of substate long-term industry and occupational projections will continue through next winter. Similarly, the substate short-term occupational projections will be tested to see if they are of any value.

### **3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use:**

The LMI Center continues to work closely with the North Dakota Career Resource Network (NDCRN) to develop and disseminate pertinent occupational and career information products. The LMI Center again provided data to the CRN for the *Career Outlook*, an annual tabloid provided to high school students, their parents, career guidance counselors, One-Stop resource rooms, etc. In addition, Marcia Slag from LMI has been involved with NDCRN in assisting with the layout and content of the *Career Outlook*.

The Occupational Information System (OIS) was maintained as a part of the LMI Data Warehouse until late spring, when a joint decision was made by NDCRN and LMI to disable the system and replace it with a new system. The old version was outdated and based on old coding systems (SIC and OES based SOC). The LMI Center and NDCRN have worked with the Georgia CRN to adapt their newly developed OIS product to North Dakota.

The LMI Center developed a new product designed for students. The *Occupational Trading Cards* utilize information from our 2012 occupational projections and our OES wage information in a colorful baseball card type format. Each of the nine trading cards contains information on wages, training requirements, number of annual openings, and employment for specific occupations within that occupational family. The cards have been extremely popular with schools, career fairs, career counselors, and in our One-Stop resource rooms. They were so popular that our supply from the initial printing in November 2004 was quickly gone. The LMI Center decided to make some improvements on the look and feel of these trading cards for the second printing in June 2005.

In order to provide the full occupational and industrial detail of the 2012 employment projections, the LMI Center also published the *North Dakota Employment Projections 2012* in early winter 2005.

The annual *North Dakota Employment and Wages* was published in August of 2004. This publication displays covered employment and wage data at various industrial and geographic breakouts in an updated format.

One of our most popular publications, *Wages for North Dakota Jobs*, came out in April 2005. This publication provides detailed occupational wage and employment information for the state of North Dakota, the three MSA's, and four substate regions. Based on customer feedback, the format of the publication was changed to list the wage information from all the areas (statewide, MSA's, and substate regions) together for each occupation.

Conversations with our local One-Stop offices, economic developers, and business customers indicated a need for occupational wage and fringe benefit information at a local and industry level. In response to this need, the LMI Center developed *Compensation Guides* specifically targeted to individual cities and industries. These guides provide data from our fringe benefit surveys, occupational wage and employment data, occupational descriptions, and related information in one easy-to-use publication. Each guide provides information for those occupations employed by a particular industry in a specific city or area. *Compensation Guides* for over 160 industry/area combinations were created and were put in PDF format on our website. Since these *Compensation Guides* debuted in April of 2004, they have become extremely popular. The LMI Center updated these Compensation Guides with new occupational wage and fringe benefits information in April 2005.

The LMI Center conducts Fringe Benefit Surveys in 13 North Dakota cities and areas on a two-year rotating basis. During this program year, surveys were completed in Beulah-Hazen, Bismarck-Mandan, Devils Lake, Grafton, Grand Forks, Minot, and Valley City. The results of these surveys were compiled and published in PDF format on our website.

In addition, the LMI Center developed the *2005 North Dakota Benefits Guide* in June 2005. This glossy brochure contains a compilation of fringe benefits information from the 13 cities and areas. The format for this new publication allows easy comparisons of fringe benefits information from city to city, industry to industry, or by size of firm.

The LMI Center conducted a Religious Employment Survey in North Dakota. The survey was completed last fall. However, due to staff turnover, the actual publication was not completed until this summer. The web-based publication was posted to our website in August 2005.

Work on the new occupational group brochures and career information brochures began late in this program year, but have been put on hold until the 2014 projections data becomes available.

All of the publications listed above have been loaded on our LMI website as PDF's.

**4. Provide information and support to state and local Workforce Investment Board (WIBs) and provide other special demand information products and services:**

The LMI Center continues to work closely with the Workforce Development Council (WDC). (The WDC is North Dakota's only Workforce Investment Board.) Designated staff have attended all the WDC meetings and LMI staff members have made several presentations to the WDC and its subcommittees during the past program year. We have provided technical expertise to the WDC in the development and design of new surveys to provide valuable information on labor availability and occupational skills needs in the workforce.

In collaboration with the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA) and the WDC, the LMI Center completed work on an Employer Needs Survey and Labor Availability Study in June 2005. This unique combination of concurrent studies allows the civic leaders in Bismarck-Mandan to compare the workforce needs of their businesses in their area with the available labor supply in their vicinity.

The LMI Center partnered with the WDC and the Department of Commerce to conduct Labor Availability Studies in 22 North Dakota communities/areas. This is the second round of these very useful and highly requested surveys. The Social Science Research Center at the University of North Dakota completed the telephone survey in the spring of 2004. The LMI Center then compiled the results and provided the analysis and narrative reports to the 22 communities in summer 2004.

The LMI Center partnered with the WDC, Department of Commerce, North Dakota University System, and the Department of Career and Technical Education to conduct an Occupational Skills Needs Assessment for key industries in North Dakota. The survey was delayed to some degree as partner agencies worked out the details and agreed to a methodology for this new project. The LMI staff members designed the survey instrument, selected the sample, and began the mailing of the surveys in the early summer of 2004. The preliminary results were presented to the partner agencies in December 2004 and the final result presented in March of 2005.

Last September the LMI Center was heavily involved with the Workforce Summit put on by the Governor, the North Dakota Department of Commerce, and the Workforce Development Council. LMI staff conducted workshops on pertinent workforce information topics and provided Labor Market Information products for display at the conference. Even more importantly, the LMI Center developed the *North Dakota State of the Workforce* publication for each of the Summit's attendees. This publication, which covered such topics as current economic conditions, occupational supply/demand information, information on North Dakota's Workforce System and Workforce Programs, etc. served as the informational centerpiece for the conference participants.

The LMI Center held monthly economic briefing meetings to discuss monthly employment and unemployment data releases, other new workforce information, current economic conditions in the state, and a variety of related topics. Representatives from the Department of Commerce, Tax Department, Workforce Development Council, Office of Management and Budget, Governor's Staff, Dislocated Worker Unit, and our Job Service Executive Director are invited to attend.

The MOU between the Census Bureau and Job Service North Dakota has been signed, and the Census Bureau has obtained additional funding to allow North Dakota to become a member of the LED partnership. Job Service North Dakota had assembled the history files of wage records and QCEW data and submitted them to the Census Bureau. In return the Census Bureau has provided us with Quarterly Workforce Indicators for our review early this spring. The LMI Center began the process of reviewing and testing of these indicators for reasonableness and comparability with other data sources before publishing. However, staff turnover in that position has delayed that process.

In the fall of 2003, the LMI Center developed a new product entitled *Local Area Profiles* in support of local economic development efforts and our local One-Stop offices in 13 of our largest cities. The *Local Area Profiles* utilize data from the QCEW program and other sources to provide data on industry employment and wages, number of firms, firm size, census information, and other related information for the current year and the previous year. The response we received from local economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, our business services representatives in our One-Stop offices, and other local civic and business group was extremely positive. While these profiles have been beneficial to all cities in promoting their communities, those cities that are not MSA's and as a result do not have any other source of employment information, found it especially valuable. Printing of the 2004 edition of the *Local Area Profiles*, which contains updated QCEW information and the new top ten employers listing for each city, was completed in September 2004. The LMI Center began assembling information for the 2005 edition of the *Local Area Profiles* this summer.

The 2005 Largest Employer Listing was updated on our website in late May 2005. This annual listing provides a ranking of the top 100 employers in North Dakota based on total employment. In addition, we updated the listing of largest employers for each of the 14 largest cities in North Dakota.

Customer feedback from our One-Stop offices indicated a need for an area workforce summary specific to their area, similar to those used in the LMI@Work training. As the LMI Center began to investigate the best way to do these, it became apparent through discussions with our One-Stop Area Directors, that it would be better to train the One-Stop staff members on how to develop these themselves. As a result, the LMI Center developed a very detailed area workforce summary template, and a two-day training session for One-Stop Staff members on how to find and use the information on the LMI Data Warehouse to fill in this template. This training was successfully piloted in the Grand Forks Area in May 2004, and was provided to the rest of the state during the fall of 2004 and winter of 2005.

Using the “IMPLAN” software, the LMI Center has done several impact analysis studies. These studies have varied from the impact of plant closings and major layoffs to the potential impact of new manufacturing plants locating in a community. One of the larger studies involved the impact of the several scenarios for the closing or partial closing of each of North Dakota’s Air Force Bases in Minot and Grand Forks.

In response to requests from local economic developers and Native American tribal leaders, the LMI Center completed work on *Demographic Profiles* in August of 2004. Based on the most recent census information, the *Demographic Profiles* contain general demographic information, selected social characteristics, selected economic data, and housing characteristics available in PDF format on our website. Profiles were developed for all the North Dakota counties, reservations, MSA’s, selected cities, and the state as a whole.

Work was also completed on the *Affirmative Action Packages* for each of North Dakota counties. These *Affirmative Action Packages* were completed in August 2004 and loaded on to our website in PDF format.

Several of the products mentioned in core product #3 have also proved to be very useful by our WDC and its partners.

#### **5. Improve and deploy electronic state workforce information delivery systems:**

The LMI Data Warehouse contains all the information on the ALMIS database as well as additional workforce information items produced only by North Dakota. Data items produced regularly in the LMI Center are loaded upon release into the Data Warehouse. In addition, all hard copy publications have been loaded onto the website in PDF’s within a week or two of publication.

As mentioned in core product numbers 3 and 5, the LMI Center has developed several new web-based products for our customers and is continuing to explore ways to utilize the web to minimize the costs and increased turnaround time associated with printing and hard copy distribution. As an example, the new *Compensation Guides*, *Demographic Profiles*, and *Affirmative Action* publications are available only on our website. Because of the limited shelf life of some products and the many area/industry combinations of others (i.e., users can pick from over 160 area/industry combinations for the *Compensation Guides*, about 75 areas for the *Demographic Profiles*, and all 53 counties for the *Affirmative Action* publications), the use of PDF’s was the most efficient and timely method of delivery.

Due to this expanded need for an efficient and user-friendly electronic delivery system, the LMI Center is in the process of upgrading or replacing the LMI Data Warehouse. A Data Warehouse replacement work team has been studying how to best replace or upgrade the Data Warehouse and still maintain consistency with our agency’s website and Virtual One Stop. This team is investigating the possibility of purchasing special LMI Delivery systems from private vendors such as Workforce Informer from Cyber and

Virtual LMI from GeoSolutions, contracting with an independent website designer, or perhaps doing the redesign internally. The work team put on a Joint Applications Development (JAD) Session with representatives from IT, the LMI Center, and several of our customers to obtain feedback on the types of functionality and data sets needed to be incorporated into the new LMI Electronic Delivery System (EDS).

This major project is now part of the agency-wide Information Technology Plan and is being managed by our agency's IT department. As with many IT projects of this size, North Dakota has experienced some delays due to limited IT resources, other priority projects on the agency's IT Plan, and other unforeseen issues. The development of the RFP has also taken longer than anticipated and was issued in early summer of 2005. As a result, the timetable for this project has been revised. The project is now tentatively scheduled for completion in the fall of 2006.

Because we are a small state with limited resources, we have been strategically planning for this major project for some time and have consulted with ETA's LMI Federal Project Officer (FPO) on numerous occasions. As past grant savings opportunities have arisen, we have pooled the dollars associated with those savings with the long-term goal of upgrading the infrastructure of the major delivery mechanism for our workforce information. The delays experienced in this project have caused a pushback in the actual delivery date in the next program year. As a result, the pooled funds for this major expenditure will be carried over into the next program year.

#### **6. Support state workforce information training activities:**

North Dakota's work in this area had two primary focuses: LMI staff development and the training of and presentations to specific customer groups.

LMI staff members attended a variety of training to improve their skills and knowledge, to find out about new developments relating to workforce information, to learn about best practices from other states, and to interact with LMI staff from around the country. The LMI Center utilized the LMI Institute for much of this training. Marcia Slag, Warren Boyd, and Nelse Grundvig attended the LMI Forum in Portland, Oregon, in October 2004. One of our newest analysts, Lisa Knapp, attended Basic Analyst Training. Marcia Slag and Nelse Grundvig participated in LED Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) training sessions. Our ALMIS database specialist, Bala Pendyal, attended the ALMIS Database Training in Raleigh.

LMI Staff members also participated in national and tri-regional conference/training that provided them with updates on new program developments and procedures, new program software, and the opportunity to discuss problems and ideas with national and regional BLS staff as well as their peers. Stacy Kramer, Lisa Knapp, and Sharon Viton attended the national technical training conferences for the QCEW, MLS, and OES programs, respectively. Michael Ziesch attended the national LAUS technical training conference and the CES national technical training conference. In addition, Michael attended special training on the implementation of the new LAUS modeling software and also on the new PROMIS Software.

Lisa Knapp attended Prevailing Wage Training in Chicago. Nelse Grundvig attended the LED National Meeting in Washington DC. Marcia Slag participated in the Geographic Solutions Users Conference in Clearwater, Florida. Duane Broschat attended the NASWA LMI Director's Conference and BLS LMI Director's Conference. Nelse Grundvig, Marcia Slag, and Duane Broschat participated the Governor's Workforce Summit in Fargo.

A variety of other training was utilized for capacity building on the LMI team. Erlys Paul attended a Proofreading and Grammar training seminar. Marcia Slag attended a week-long Advanced Facilitation Training session. Michael Ziesch and Raquel Green participated in an advanced presentations seminar. In preparation for the LMI Data Warehouse Replacement Project, Craig Koch and Marcia Slag attended a SEGUE training course, which taught them how to write test scripts for the implementation phase of the project. Also related to this project, Craig Koch completed a Project Management Course.

All of these training activities have added to the knowledge base and technical abilities of the LMI Center staff. This in turn has and will continue to manifest itself in many new and innovative products and services for our customers.

The second focus of this deliverable is the training of our customers. The training of our customers is a very high priority in North Dakota. In addition to the many formal and informal training sessions listed below, the LMI Center has developed a series of on-line LMI training modules. This series of modules is designed to help specific customer groups use our LMI Data Warehouse as they work through cases studies unique to them. These modules use screen shots of the Data Warehouse to assist trainees in answering typical workforce-related questions in their case study.

Members of the LMI staff have provided over 40 presentations or training sessions for various customer groups during the past program year. These ranged from formal in-depth training sessions of two or three days to short presentations to specific customers groups.

As previously mentioned, the LMI Center presented the LMI@Work training to key staff in each of our One-Stop Offices. Staff from the LMI Center also provided training to our One-Stop Office's Rapid Response teams in how to use LMI in working with individuals affected by significant layoffs. As mentioned earlier in this report, LMI Center staff conducted three workshops at the Governor's Workforce Summit last October.

Several LMI presentations were made to the Workforce Development Council, as well as to the North Dakota Youth Council, the Governor's staff, the North Dakota Board for Career and Technical Education, North Dakota Commerce Department, Job Service Senior Management, and a variety of other groups. In addition, we provided LMI workshops at statewide conferences for the economic developers, career guidance counselors, Veterans representatives, and Association of University Women.



Special LMI training sessions have been tailored to specific customer groups. For example, the LMI Center has developed a track for local economic developers and has presented this to individual local economic development entities and at two regional conferences for local economic developers. In several cases, we have worked one-on-one with local economic developers in explaining how our LMI products and other resources can be utilized in their particular area.

LMI Staff members conducted training in eleven of our One-Stop offices on how to utilize our LMI products in working with businesses and job seekers. We have also teamed with our local One-Stop offices in providing the LMI portion of the re-employment workshops in the cities where significant layoffs have occurred. Many other local presentations/training sessions were provided to a wide range of customer groups such as the Fargo-Moorhead Human Resources Association, Dickinson Manufacturers Roundtable, the Council of United Way Agencies, the Turtle Mountain Business Expo, the Hettinger Development Association, the Fargo-West Fargo Public Schools, the United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck-Mandan Development Association, University of Mary, etc. In other cases, the LMI Center provided PowerPoints, speaker's notes, and supporting information for our One-Stop staff members to make presentations to local civic or business associations.

## **B. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT:**

North Dakota feels very strongly that customer feedback is extremely important in planning for and developing an efficient and comprehensive workforce information delivery system. North Dakota used a combination of strategies to obtain feedback on customer satisfaction, with existing workforce information and services, as well as suggestions for developing new products and improving existing products. As mentioned in the discussion of our activities for the various core products in Section A, the LMI Center has utilized the feedback we have received from our customers to develop several new products and delivery formats. This customer feedback will continue to be the key element the LMI Center will use in evaluating current LMI products and services and in the planning for future LMI activities.

The LMI Center completed a customer satisfaction survey late in the previous program year. As a result, it was decided not to do another survey this program year, but wait until program year '05 to do another formal customer satisfaction survey. Instead, an emphasis was placed on obtaining customer feedback from informal focus groups, presentation evaluations, and one-to-one conversations with our customers.

### **2. Informal Focus Group and Meetings:**

During the past year, staff members from the LMI Center made an effort to sit down and visit several of our key customers about products and services in a very informal focus group/discussion group-type setting. In addition, we have had several one-on-one

sessions or group discussions with One-Stop offices, North Dakota Career Resource Network, WDC staff, Commerce Department, and local economic developers. These conversations have been invaluable in discovering their workforce information needs and how we might be able to help them. Listed below are notes from some of these discussions.

**General comments:**

- Really like the new look of LMI publications
- Very few people in our office actually use the Data Warehouse, they just go to the publications page
- Need to be mindful that not all areas (i.e. rural, tribal reservations) have access to internet
- New look of the products make us (One-Stop Staff) look professional with our customers
- Demographic Profiles very useful in Turtle Mountain
- Like recent changes in LMI publications
- LMI staff has always been very helpful to me.
- Can LMI develop a template that we can use to put together customized packages of local labor market information for businesses looking to locate in our area?
- Miss the analysis the LMI used to provide
- Appreciate the support we got from Nelse and Warren, I have them on my speed dial.
- Some data is old by the time we get it.
- Need more localized products
- Great new publications—you are on the right track
- People like to see graphs, charts, bullets, --its easier for them to understand
- Work with local office staff in evaluating new ideas
- Utilize local office staff in tracking down nonrespondents to largest employer listing
- We do not always hear about it when new publications come out.
- Could CSA IV host a focus group of local economic developers and LMI?
- Can LMI provide city documents similar to what is done in Rolla Local Office?
- Would like to see more mapping of data
- It's nice to have something professional looking to give to businesses when we call on them.

**LMI products currently using/most useful:**

- Wage Survey booklet—really like new format
- Area Profiles, Wage info
- New Benefits guide is so much easier to use and understand.
- Demographic Profiles, Census Info
- Baseball cards are a big hit at Career Fairs
- Compensation guides work well
- Useful in a more generic way
- Area Profiles—being used in Fargo by Chamber, even real estate companies.
- Use Wages book often, as it is easier to use than the Data Warehouse
- Use Projections trifold a lot
- Benefits Survey, Wages, LES
- Schools just love the trading cards
- Area Profiles info useful for economic developers

**Employer discussions/questions:**

- #1 request is wage ranges by industry
- Employers need immediate answers
- Work with economic development associations on a regular basis
- Staff does limited analysis to support general info of labor force
- What compensation package do I need to offer to attract and retain qualified workers in my industry and in my area?
- Wage related data and benefits are most common requests
- Mainly ad hoc requests
- Requests for job descriptions
- Staff is asked about doing training needs evaluations for businesses – could we do this throughout the state?
- Need localized information on wages
- Census data
- Most common complaint is that the info is not up to date

**What do businesses ask for that is not currently available?**

- More current wage data
- Retention info
- Local information for small towns
- Different pieces of our publications (that they view as necessary) rolled into one piece, specifically for a business
- Turnover rates
- We are already providing a lot of the info they need
- Information such as what we proposed in the template
- Easily accessible labor availability info and wages
- Occupational wages within more immediate area

**What kinds of tools or aids would you like to see developed that might help you in working with employers?**

- Customized packages
- Occupational Supply/Demand by area (openings vs. applicants)
- More publications for smaller towns and counties
- Wage and Benefit info for their area/industry
- Pieces of info from different publications combined into one
- Template we proposed
- Ability to generate their own reports
- Specialized publications specific to their area – similar to LES, but more often
- Info more specific to their area

**Would businesses/economic developers be interested in specialized LMI training? (i.e. how to find info on LMI Warehouse, etc.)**

- Set up sessions every month, then advertise to employers
- Something their staff can handle
- They don't get a lot of requests for this
- Could develop packaged presentations for specific groups
- Not many requests
- Economic developers need to know how to use the info and more importantly, how to find it
- Businesses may not want to take the time to learn this, when it should be a service JSND provides for them; economic developers may be a more likely candidate
- They don't get too many requests for individual presentations, but it could be a possibility at a higher level; i.e. economic developers convention (migration pattern, projections, wage changes)

- Local office targets audience with their own presentations, as they have an understanding of what is needed
- It would be hard for them to use a standard presentation developed by us; LMI should do the presentations
- Could develop packaged presentations for specific groups
- Dickinson is in the process of lining up some presentations and would like for us to be a part of them
- Presentations such as this should be geared more toward economic developers

**Does local office staff need LMI training and to what extent?**

- Should train local office staff before any employer sessions – perhaps twice per month
- They are working on developing their own scripts to use on LMI based common questions
- They will use the tutorial for job seekers and businesses for a review
- Could possibly use yearly (very general) LMI course for local office staff
- Staff need to become more competent in using and finding info on the Data Warehouse
- Like using tutorial that was developed for job seekers side and business services side
- Yes - they don't use it daily
- It is hard for them to understand the different pieces of information available and how it can be used
- They would like to see us do scenarios in a lab setting, so staff can actually walk through it themselves
- They would like to see us more often

**If local offices develop a welcoming kit for new employers, what type of LMI could be included? (discussed at Customer Service Coord. Team rally)**

- See a use for economic developer packages, not necessarily for businesses
- Welcoming kit would be too general of a piece to use; they are going to focus on becoming more involved in specifying information based on customer needs
- Probably won't develop a welcoming kit, but rather customized packages based upon their requests for info

**Website (specifically Data Warehouse):**

- Find it difficult to find what they need – info is “all over the board”
- Data Warehouse is not a user-friendly tool for someone other than LMI staff
- Hope our new program (to replace Data Warehouse) will be easier to navigate
- Staff need to become more familiar with data available
- Like idea of being able to generate reports on the web for current and historical data
- More efficient use of scroll down screens – you lose the titles on top
- Most people only use the publications page on the website.
- Should be able to open a description off of the occupational and alternative titles (i.e. Programmer Analyst II)
- Suggested using GIS to apply to LMI site
- Customizable reports where businesses could select their own data elements
- Don't like look of Data Warehouse boxes
- Hard to find titles (option for alternate titles would help)
- Need keyword search
- Primarily uses web to find info, not the publications quite as much
- Have to click twice to get to the employer's site on the List of Employers page (could have that additional info with the employer name on the first page to avoid 2 clicks)
- JSND banner should stay on top no matter what other site you click to from our home page
- Provide link to O\*Net code of occupational info
- Would like to see customized, self-services available through LMI site
- Make LMI fully functional in VOS

- LMI section on VOS not useful – should have link to Data Warehouse, to avoid confusion
- Data Warehouse not easy to understand

### **Review template**

- Good start
- Economic developers may use more than businesses
- Businesses, economic developers really don't have a need for something like this, unless they are considering expansion or relocation
- Could use info on the template such as number of people in labor market, skills, wages, commuting patterns, job training
- Could start within a 100 mile radius of city, then become more detailed in info as radius is shortened
- Prefer local office staff do this type of work as it is needed; feels staff need to know the Data Warehouse info
- Like the LMI @ Work template
- Our template should be a Word or Excel file, or something other than PDF, so it can be revised by local offices
- Build template based on most common local office requests
- Need to do more industry-based products/info (be more specific to them)
- Templates for industries, regions, and job seekers (career planning)
- Add where training is available for certain occupations and the success rate for training facilities
- Add number of job openings
- Break down occupational info
- Change language so it is easy to understand (i.e. mean)
- Add projections, wages and info from projections trifold for job seeker template
- Would like something like this accessible online
- Should focus on the industries where there is the most demand
- We could develop a template for local offices to hand out to economic developers to give them an idea of the different types of info that could be provided
- Could also use the template as an info piece for local offices when they are out at meetings or giving presentations
- Businesses need immediate, customized results – can't necessarily wait for us
- Template could be a nice info piece for them to hand out
- Majority of requests need to be customized, within a short time period

### **LMI's role in CSA's CuSCoT plan**

- Help staff to understand our info and present it in correct format
- Assist in developing customized packages
- Suggested getting copies of each CSA's plan to help us determine our role
- Work closely with local offices
- Need LMI expert on their staff
- More training in local offices

### **Other comments:**

- Do we need to date the info on the website – can there be a “Most Current Data” button and a “Historical Data” button? Employers see the dates on the most recent data we have, and think that our website has not been updated.
- Started following Melanie Arthur's economic analysis use
- Need to help enable staff to understand LMI for self-sufficiency
- Would like to see us develop data elements for geographic areas in the form of narrative reports and high-quality power point presentations (i.e. Balancing Act)
- Grand Forks is co-locating with SBA, SBDC which will be an opportunity for joint marketing efforts and to serve as a joint resource area
- In mailing publications, we need to identify and send specifically to people in local offices

- LMI posters were well-received; would like to see more developed
- Like both the wheel and Products and Services booklet ideas as products
- Would like to see something like “Regional RoadMaps” developed
- Could use an LMI presentation on power point for resource room staff – mainly FAQ’s
- Screen saver in resource room would be useful
- Suggested doing ongoing labor availability studies
- SBA centers in each CSA would have some helpful suggestions
- Develop focus groups rather than advisory groups to capture different people at different stages
- Notify local offices of major changes immediately (i.e. discontinuation of publications)
- Would like for us to provide customized info in PDF format
- Add instructions in wage books, etc. on how to use or find info in Data Warehouse
- Should have LMI products and services info and links to our info, on mini-CD’s for handouts
- Would like to see us there on a more regular basis

### **3. Feedback From Presentations and Training Sessions:**

We have also received valuable feedback from participants in our training sessions and presentations. We closely review the evaluation forms we receive from training sessions and have often received very timely ideas and suggestions from informal discussions with individuals during or after these sessions.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES TO THE SUITE OF CORE PRODUCTS:**

The list of core products and services for the Workforce Information Grant has evolved over the past few years. The current suite of core products provides a relatively concise grouping of the most common categories of products produced by most states while allowing individual states the flexibility to tailor products to the most critical needs in their state. Although it is important for several of the products, such as the ALMIS Database and Projections to be consistent across the nation, the many differences from state to state require that individual LMI departments maintain this flexibility to address the workforce information needs unique to their state.

As such, North Dakota does not have many recommendations for changes to the suite of core products. The following are a few observations we have made based on conversations with our various customers.

The need for fringe benefit information is becoming more and more of a critical need for our business customers. Fringe benefit surveys should be able to identify differences in fringe benefit packages offered by the geographic area, industry, and size of businesses. North Dakota currently conducts its own fringe benefits surveys as a part of core product #3, but this is one item that not all states currently produce.

Our customers are constantly requesting more localized products and services. Individual communities are looking for workforce information that they can use to measure the health and growth of their communities and that they can use to promote their areas. We believe that each state needs to develop some series of localized products.

As we have developed new products and services and made existing ones more useful, our customers are becoming very reliant on many of the products we produce under the Workforce Information Grant. Accordingly, it is critical that adequate funding continues to flow to the state LMI departments through the Workforce Information Grant so that these customers will continue to have access the workforce information they need and have come to depend upon us to produce.